

In the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 11, line 8, with the following rewritten paragraph:

After the movement of the upper surface plate 50 is finished, the valve 66 of the pressure-equalizing line 64 is opened so that the vacuum attraction passage 48 acquires the atmospheric pressure and is then closed. The lift pins 30 are raised to push up the first substrate 12 (bonded first and second substrates 12 and 14) while purging the vacuum attraction passage 48 by introducing nitrogen through the attraction line 56 and opening the valve 58), so that the bonded first and second substrates 12 and 14 are peeled off from the lower electrostatic chuck 46. In this instance, ~~a~~the resin sheet 32 exists, the first substrate 12 (bonded first and second substrates 12 and 14) is reliably peeled off from the lower electrostatic chuck 46 without clinging thereto.